

State Agencies Collaborate To Promote Re-Entry

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J. David Donahue, Commissioner

We are pleased to support Commissioner Donahue’s efforts to bring offenders successfully back into society. We know for many offenders it is critically important to maintain the continuum of medical and mental health care that they received in the correctional facility. They must continue receiving the medications and appropriate care that are part of their overall rehabilitation effort. If this cooperation between our two agencies can positively impact the lives of these offenders and stem the pattern of recidivism, this project will be well worth the effort.”

Mitch Roob,
Secretary of FSSA

Related Media Coverage

INDIANAPOLIS – (November 8, 2006) – The Indiana Department of Correction (DOC) and the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) have formalized an agreement to assist offenders applying for social services prior to their release from prison. The agreement encourages DOC staff to contact FSSA offices approximately 90 days prior to the offender’s release date to initiate the application process for post-release services. A major focus is the critical need for continuity of treatment for mental health and addiction issues often under control while the offender is incarcerated. When the offender is released, there can be an interruption in treatment that can lead to inappropriate or illegal activity.

“By starting the application process while the offenders are incarcerated, the benefits for which the offender may qualify can begin in a timely manner upon their release to the community,” said

Commissioner J. David Donahue.

Mitch Roob, Secretary of FSSA, added, “We are pleased to support Commissioner Donahue’s efforts to bring offenders successfully back into society. We know for many offenders it is critically important to maintain the continuum of medical and mental health care that they received in the correctional facility. They must continue receiving the medications and appropriate care that are part of their overall rehabilitation effort. If this cooperation between our two agencies can positively impact the lives of these offenders and stem the pattern of recidivism, this project will be well worth the effort.”

“The first weeks after release are critical for the offender’s successful re-entry into society. We have developed a comprehensive re-entry program component for all offenders which begins on day one,” added Donahue. “It’s exciting that FSSA will be playing an active role as a service provider for mental health and social services.”

Collaborative partnerships already in place by other state agencies enhancing the re-entry efforts include: The Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA) which helps communities build upon their assets. IHCDA supports a broad range of housing solutions ranging from temporary shelters to homeownership. IHCDA has developed a state action plan to end chronic homelessness. This plan includes as one of its top strategies ensuring that individuals are not being released or discharged from state and local facilities or institutions into homelessness.

Earlier this year, the Department of Correction and the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) signed an agreement which allows a full-time, on-site DWD employee at the Plainfield Re-entry Education Facility (PREF) to help offenders at PREF find employment. The DWD also offers workshops to help prepare the offenders for re-entry into the workforce. The workshops cover such skills as writing resumes, interviewing, and how to dress appropriately for interview. As a result of this partnership, the Plainfield Re-Entry Educational Facility held its first Opportunity Fair in October. Over twenty Central Indiana businesses attended the fair. The event, co-sponsored by WorkOne and the Hendricks County Economic Development Partnership, was designed to encourage employers to consider hiring previously incarcerated individuals while explaining how the facility prepares residents for re-entry into society.

“Developing partnerships with intra-state agencies, employers and the communities is the best solution we can provide to offenders and their loved ones,” added Donahue. “When it comes to public safety, we all have a role to play.”

About The Department of Correction

The Department employs over 8,000 employees and houses 24,000 adult and juveniles in 32 facilities, ranging from minimum to maximum custody, prison camps, juvenile facilities and work release centers. The Department’s home page on the Internet can be found at: <http://www.in.gov/indcorrection>. The Department’s Re-entry Site can be found: <http://www.reentry.in.gov>.

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